THE BIBLE SPEAKS

International Bureau of Bible Teachers

BY DR. KENNETH L. FOREMAN

Background Scripture: I Timothy 1:1-11; II Timothy 1:1-2; Titus 1:1a, 4.

Devotional Reading: Philippians 2:14-24.

Letters Into Books

Lesson for October 4, 1964

"What in the world were you reading from?" one of the congregation asked the preacher. They had had a service of ordination at which a number of new church officers had been installed, and the preacher had read from the New Testament in a modern (Moffatt's) translation.

"I was reading from First and Second Timothy," the preacher replied to the man's question.

"Never heard anything like it," the questioner went on. "Best thing on church officers I ever heard. I had had no idea what Timothy and Titus were all about."

Who?

The short "Books" we call Timothy, Titus and Philemon, were originally letters. Who wrote them? This may not be the most important question but it is one of the most interesting. We run head-on into long argument when we ask flatly: who wrote these letters? (There's no problem about Philemon; we shall come to that in time. But Timothy I and II, and Titus, present a problem.) The early Christians who adopted these books into the then still growing New Testament (so new it did not have a name) thought that Paul wrote them. Careful study given by many scholars over many years has shown, however, that in large sections of these books the ideas and the way they are expressed, and — what is most remarkable — the very words used, are distinctly different from the known letters of Paul. We can sum up the evidence by saying that there are part of these letters which read in Greek, the language in which they of course were written exactly like Paul and are almost certainly from his pen and mind. There are other sections which do not read like Paul. A conclusion reached by many is that either some one else wrote the letters, quoting extensively from Paul, or that Paul wrote the original letters, and either he or some editor added material from some one else.

What?

The what is more important than the Who? What are these letters - into - books concerned with? What problems do they bring out? What answers do they give? What good are these very ancient letters to the living church today? Such questions will be with us for the next three months. We can give a sort of short statement here at the beginning as to what these small books are all about. They deal with leadership in the church.

Why?

But why this interest in leaders, all of a sudden? The reason is simple. The earliest Christians had no formal organization prior experiences.

Romans far excels the other letters in expressing the mind of Paul about Christianity. It is more general in nature and is better organized. It will probably take at least two readings, perhaps from one of the modern translations, for us even to begin to grasp Paul's ideas in Romans.

By this time in our reading we have discovered that Jesus and the early Christians had a body of sacred writings to which they made frequent reference in speaking and writing. This body of sacred writings was what we call the Old Testament. Next week we shall deal with this "Bible" of Jesus and the early Christians.

We should attempt to learn several things about a book in the Bible before reading it: who wrote it, when he wrote it, for whom he wrote it, and the type(s) of literature in the book. This basic information will help us better to understand the book and can usually be found in any good study Bible. Now to the task at hand! READ.

Thomas A. Waddiff, Pastor
Spout Spring Baptist Church

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Pastor Says—

Last week we suggested that the Bible is a collection of "books" to be read one at a time rather than from beginning to end. This week we want to talk about a plan for reading the Bible. Most Christian denominations publish a Bible reading and devotional guide. These are good and I would like to encourage their use. What we are dealing with in this article is more intensive study.

We would want to start with the most important part. For the Christian this is the New Testament. The Gospels record the life and work of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Choose one Gospel and read it through, keeping in mind John 20:31, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." To create faith was the purpose of each Gospel writer. Reading any Gospel will give us the main facts and teachings about the MAIN character in the history of Christianity, the Author of our faith.

The book of Acts is a sequel to the Gospels and might well be our second choice. It tells us what happened as a result of the resurrection of Jesus, the beginings of Christianity. In reading Acts we soon discover that the foremost personality is Paul, and so we might want to consider some of his writings next. Which one we choose is up to us and would depend on our basis for choice, e.g. one letter might have a special appeal because of our

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Walter Glenn, of and Mrs. Robert of Hixburg, Jersey, New Jersey on September 14th, for a week's visit with Mr. and Mrs. Raymond A. Schwab, Mrs. Gray's parents.

They visited the studio and factory of sculptor Edward Marshall Boehm, famous for his porcelain objects of art, and also his first retrospective exhibition of his porcelain works in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The trip was of particular interest to Mrs. Glenn because of her collection of the Boehm Birds.

Mr. G. A. Parks, of Chicago, Illinois, is visiting with his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Martin.

Seamen First Class Michal John Lair spent the week end with his parents, Commander and Mrs. H. P. Lair. Seamen First Class Lair will be leaving for a Mediterranean cruise within the next week.

Cuirdo Ann Brooks, International Farm Youth Exchangee, from England, was back for a second visit with Commander and Mrs. H. P. Lair. She left on Sunday, September 27th after spending several days with the Lair's. She is now visiting with a family in Winchester, Va. before attending meetings in Washington, D.C., and then sailing for England on October 7th.

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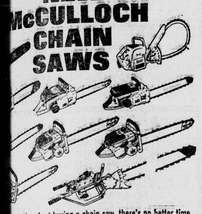

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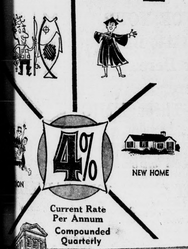

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Evergreen

Rev. R. P. Welsh had charge of services at the Baptist church Sunday evening in the absence of our pastor.

Richard Hamilton, of Blacksburg, VPI, and Donald Hamilton, of Bluefield College, spent the week end with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Hamilton.

Mr. and Mrs. Palmer Ranson, of Norfolk, visited Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Garrett Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Thompson, of Lynchburg, spent Sunday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Glover.

Little David Garrett, Jr. has returned home from the hospital much improved. Hope he will soon be well.

Mrs. C. J. Paulette visited Mrs L. M. Southall and Mrs. Elizabeth P. Robinson last Friday and Saturday in Pamplin.

Mrs. Mildred Inge, of Pamplin, spent last wednesday in the home of Mrs. Hyland Staples and family.

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Young and Mrs. Eva Cawthorn visited Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Harvey last week in Jarrett, Va.

Mrs. Nannie Ranson, Mrs. Annie Bingham and Mrs. Billy Vo'nell, all of Lynchburg, visited Mrs. Etta Jennings and Mrs. Eva Ada Gibson. Mrs. Lester B. Harvey and Mrs Mildred Warters.

Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Watson and Susan and Jewel visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Harvey Saturday.

We need rain right bad. We have cloudy weather.

Vera

The Vera P.T.A. met Thursday, Sept. 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Garrett, Gwen and Beagle, of Brookneal, Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Garrett, Jimmie and Joyce, of Lynchburg, visited Mrs. Annie H. Garrett on Verce Sunday.

Mrs. Elsie Harris is home from the hospital and is recovering nicely.

Sgt. and Mrs. Arrie B. Covington visited friends and relatives in Vera and Oakville during the week end. They left on Monday for Springfield, Mass. Sgt. Covington has been transferred from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, N.C. to Hickman Air Force Base in Springfield, Mass.

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Amos and Teresa were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Williams Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Paulette, of Richmond, spent the week end with Mrs. A. W. Covington and Mrs. H. B. Randall.

Mrs. Pauline Gunter and children visited her husband in McGuire Hospital Sunday. We hope he will soon be well and back home.

Mrs. Maggie Bryant remains about the same at the home of her daughter, Mrs. James Franklin.

Mr. and Mrs. Monk Carter are the proud parents of a boy, born last week at Virginia Baptist Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Drinkard moved into their new home at Vera Tuesday.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto their own understanding in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Pro. 3: 5.

We have ehad fine weather for September. It's been rather cool

Visitors in the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Harvey Wednesday were Mr. Lewis Harvey, Mrs Cawthorn last week.

Mrs. Katie Austin has returned home from the hospital after an operation. She is much improved. Hope she will soon be well.

We extend sympathy to the family of Mr. S. C. Ransom.

A number attended the stationmission meeting at the Baptist church last Thursday. It was a good program.

Mrs. J. L. Evans spent the week end at Roanoke visiting Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hatcher and son.

Mrs. Carrie St John spent the week end with her brother and family, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Hodges.

Miss Wanda Ray Legrand and friend, of Richmond, spent Saturday with her father, Mr. A. A. Legrand.

Home coming will be observed at the Methodist Church next Sunday, Oct. 4.

Gladstone

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Miller, of Daytona Beach, Fla., are visiting their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Lariew and family.

Mrs. Minnie Glover has returned from a visit in Loren, West Va., with her niece, Mrs. H. J. Gibson and family.

Henry F. Martin, who has been visiting friends and relatives in Gladstone, Rustburg and Richmond, has returned to his home in Huntington, West Va. spent the week end with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Akers.

Mrs. A. J. Hesson, of Richmond, visited Mrs. J. A. Hesson over the week end.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Stanley, Jr. and Wayne visited Mrs. Omar Seay who returned home from the hospital, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert McAllister, of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., were recent visitors in Gladstone. They were accompanied home by Mrs. Bertie McAllister who has been visiting Mrs. C. R. Brown.

Rocks

Sept. 28 — Farmers are busy cutting hay and getting ready to sow wheat.

A number of the ladies attended the W.M.U. Workshop meeting at Liberty last Monday night.

The community was saddened Tuesday morning when news came that our beloved friend, Samuel Calvin Ranson, had passed away.

Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Moore left Tuesday morning for Lewisburg, W. Va., to attend the funeral of Mrs. Leslie Moore on Wednesday who passed away Sunday at Greenbrier Valley Hospital at Roosevevlt, W. Va.

A huge crowd attended the funeral of S. Calvin Ranson at Rocks Wednesday afternoon.

Sympathy is extended the family in their bereavement.

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Morris, of Appomattox, were supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Aulden Roach Tuesday night.

Mr. Gossom spent a few days last week in Lynchburg.

Clarence Richardson went back to see the doctor at Appomattox Friday morning.

Mrs. Flora Dickerson went to see her doctor in Lynchburg Friday afternoon. Quite a few called to see her last week.

Little Jane Almond, who was sick last week, is out again.

Mrs. Joe Almond and Jane spent Friday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Richardson.

Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Ranson, of Richmond, who were here last week with his mother, Mrs. Cal Ranson, returned to Richmond Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. S. E. McGhee, of Norfolk, spent the week end here with Mrs. Mildred Inge and Mr. and Mrs. Toby Inge and family.

Also Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Ranson, Jr. of Norfolk, were visiting in the same home. They spent Saturday night with Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Richardson, of Appomattox.

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